

THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE

25

plantations as casuals, and a number of them did so intermittently, returning to the village to sleep. 464

The excess of boys over adolescent girls is explained by the fact that many of the girls were living with their prospective relatives-in-law in other villages, while the brides of the boys wearing the *upi* remained with their own people till after the *watawut*. 882
591

One man has four wives, one has three, and five have two. One of these is a boy still wearing the *upi*, whose 'wives'—they are spoken of as such although the marriage rites have not been completed—do not yet live in the village, but pay short visits only. 591
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Leaving out the 25 boys wearing the *upi*, and 4 men who sleep with them in the *tobār*, there are 107 individuals (72 adults and 35 children) living in 27 huts. The majority of huts have 3 or 4 inhabitants. The largest number sleeping, habitually, in the same hut is 7, which happens in 3 cases. One hut has a solitary occupant, an old widow, whose children are all dead. 162
592

THE DAILY ROUND

The village day begins at sunrise, with a leisurely stroll, during which frequent halts are made to enjoy the morning sun. It is not often that we wake to rain; that comes generally later in the day. The women take a briefer stroll, return home, and begin to rake together the ashes of the fire, probably still hot from having smouldered through the night. Soon the native Mission teacher blows the conch-shell which is the signal for Mass, and those who feel so inclined make their way to the church. (The church is beside the road, hidden by trees from the village, hence it does not appear in the plan. The villagers had just finished its construction when I came to live among them.) On their return, the women uncover the ovens in which taro has meanwhile been roasting, or they may boil some instead, or, if there is any over from yesterday, it may be eaten cold, together with any bits of fish or other relish that may be available. The men come along presently, the children are called up, and every one eats, but not a large meal. If the village is by the sea, some families will take their meal on to the beach and eat it round a fire kindled there. Then the women collect the scraps and call the pigs, who come on hearing their names. All now sit about for awhile, gossiping and making arrangements for the day. 512
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[264]
[231]
[552]
521

The women presently pick up their knives and packs (made of 512
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226

THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE

27

poses—in a dozen or so cleaned-out coco-nut shells. The men come in from the reef, dangling strings of fish, if they have been lucky, or from the bush with a 'possum or two on a pole over their shoulders. Smoke begins to rise from every hut, in preparation for the main meal of the day. This consists for the most part of taro, but it is essential to have a 'relish' of fish, shell-fish, or 'possum, or, in the rare event of a hunter having been successful, a piece of wild pig, if the animal is not required to be kept alive for a forthcoming feast. But either the pigs are very wary, or, which is more likely, the hunter has given less attention to his quarry than to his assignation, for it is not often that he brings home any spoil.

The meal disposed of, the sound of the conch-shell calls the village to evening service. By the time it is over, the sun will have set. There is no twilight in these latitudes, darkness falling a very short time after the sun has disappeared. Fires provide the only illumination, and soon appear dotted about the village, with groups sitting round them chatting and playing with the children. In spite of what may have seemed an uneventful day, they always have plenty to talk about, and they sometimes tease one another unmercifully. If a dance is going on, any one who wishes joins in, and, if the occasion is a ceremonial one, and is sufficiently important, every one, children as well as adults, stays up all night, some always keeping the dance going while others stop to rest, to eat, or to make love, returning to the ranks of the dancers as and when they feel inclined.

If nothing is toward, the village settles down for the night very early, unless there is a moon, when it will resound with gossip and laughter for a long time. It is considered silly to go to bed while the moon shines. Once when I excused myself for leaving the assembled company on the ground that I was sleepy, they laughed, and said: "This is not the time to go to bed. By and by, when the moon is gone, then you can sleep."

Thus runs the course of an ordinary day in the life of a Bougainville village. In order to ascertain how the natives spent their time, individually, I kept for a while a daily record of certain of those who lived nearest to me, not, of course, in great detail, but noting what they were doing for the major part of each day. The records vary, naturally, with the character of the individual. Some are much more public-spirited than others, and take a prominent part in most village activities, other arrange their days to suit their own

MARRIAGE AND SEX RELATIONS

131

When I showed my friends at Kurtatchi the photographs I had taken during a visit to the Kunua mountain natives, the first thing they noticed was the absence of loin-cloths. The women asked particularly if I had seen the Kunua women's pubic hair. On being answered in the affirmative, they seemed quite horrified, and both men and women hastened to explain that the Kunua people were only 'bush Kanakas' who did not know any better. Yet scarcely more than a few years ago they were following exactly the same fashion themselves.

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Since the upper portion of their bodies is not covered, there is no such feeling connected with the breasts. Remarks will be passed on their shape, &c., entirely devoid of sexual implication, just as we might criticize a person's nose or eyes. The breasts do not figure in the tales, and, so far as I can learn, do not bulk largely in native love-making, though firm upstanding breasts are, as has been previously stated, considered a beauty.

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In attempting to investigate the reactions of these people towards matters connected with sex, and to obtain information regarding sexual practices, I never encountered any hesitation or reticence, on the part of either men or women, whether by themselves or in mixed company. Many were quite willing to give their own personal experiences, and the details are, besides, often common knowledge throughout the village. The marital histories I have cited for illustration, when not based on personal observation or on information arising out of the collection of genealogies, were either given by the individuals concerned, or by other people in the village. All the persons mentioned were well known to me personally, unless otherwise stated.

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124

But while willing enough to talk, they have great difficulty in putting their ideas into words, even in their own language, as soon as one tries to go beyond mere concrete description. In such inarticulateness they are, of course, by no means unique. I found it more pronounced in the women than in the men, and it was, far more than shyness or opposition, my chief difficulty throughout the whole investigation.

521 ●

124

DIET, COOKING, AND MEALS

291

the taro garden with their loads, or from the reef with their little baskets of shell-fish. They begin by fetching firewood from the bush; huge loads are carried on their backs by means of slings of banana fibre hung from both shoulders after the manner of a ruck-sack. The small girls must help in this work, each according to her carrying capacity; they must also bring water. The meal does not differ greatly from that taken in the morning, except that more is eaten. Its main dish is invariably taro, either boiled or roasted, sometimes supplemented by yams, sweet-potato, or green leaves, or bread-fruit when in season. For the much needed 'relish' there will be fish, or shell-fish, or perhaps opossum, if any have been caught during the day.

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Meals may be taken either inside or outside the hut, but are most frequently eaten on the women's verandah. They are shared by all the occupants of the hut, without rule of precedence, men and women eating together, and are times of pleasant chat and laughter, especially when the family sits at leisure after their hunger has been satisfied and discusses what is to be done that day, or what has been done, if the day is over. A man and his two wives, who usually occupy adjacent huts, will often share their meal on the verandah of one of them, with the children of both in great evidence. The adolescent girls eat with their parents, and the smaller fry hover about, scrambling on and off the verandah, getting such portions of food as their elders hand over to them. But the family circle is not complete, for the boys wearing the *upi* may not join it. They come to the door at the men's side of the house to have their food handed out to them, then they must take it away and eat it on the verandah of their *tobar*, or where they please, so long as they avoid the proximity of the women. It will be remembered also that persons standing to each other in the relationship of *wagun*, *watfitio*, and *suman* may not eat in one another's presence (see Chap. II), and that if a woman eats in the presence of her daughter's husband she must do so behind her hood.

264

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Utensils used in the preparation and consumption of food are simple and few. Nowadays an occasional enamel saucepan, and perhaps a cup and a plate or two, will be seen in the villages, brought in by some returned plantation labourer. But most families do their cooking with the aid of native pots, of which they will possess at least two or three of different sizes. For

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DREAMS

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situations, unless something has taken place which has aroused ancient conflicts and brought them again into prominence in the mind of the dreamer.' It was perhaps fortunate for the dreamers that I am not a trained psycho-analyst! 154

2. 'Dreams which tell or enact a connected story and have an evident meaning, but their contents, in whole or in part, strike us as unnatural, and we cannot fit them into the fabric of our waking life.'

Certain incidents in otherwise rational dreams bring them into this category. Two dreams illustrating this point, which have not previously been quoted, are here-given:

No. 39. Togen (adult male).

I dreamed about a big *mon* (plank canoe); we caught a pig and put it in the *mon*, and we went ashore at a big village, and the people carried the *mon* to the bottom of a cliff, and we went up by a ladder (i.e. a notched tree trunk which is placed against the steepest rocks to enable them to be climbed) and the ladder waved from side to side (illustrating by motions of his hand) as we went up it. Then the people cut up the pig, and one man took pieces of the pig and took them to every house. This is a good dream. I thought it was true. 154 159 [417]

No. 61. Komun (adult female).

I dreamed an *war* ran after me. I went up in the air, my hands were waving about, I had nothing to take hold of. I said: 'What shall I hold on to?' But I did not fall down. Then I made a noise like this (she illustrated by grunting and panting). Presently I was walking along the road with Pinari (her husband) and we went to the shore, and all the women were making coco-nut-leaf baskets. I went inside a hole and went to sleep. Then Pinari told me to tell the women to fill up the water coco-nuts with pig's fat. I did not want to. I said: 'I don't want all the women to be angry and say bad things about me.' This is a bad dream. (The dreamer was unable to give any reason for saying so.)

3. 'Dreams of which the content is bizarre, confused, and nonsensical; such dreams often have a peculiar quality of unreality, and can scarcely, if at all, be related to waking thought. . . . Much

¹ These are the cleaned-out coco-nut shells which serve the women for water-bottles. They are much-cherished possessions, the more so as it is a matter of considerable time and trouble to remove the 'meat' through the 'eye' of the coco-nut. To defile them in the manner suggested in the dream would be gravely resented. It may be noted, in connexion with this dream, that the dreamer was at the time pregnant by a man other than her husband, and had been the subject of much gossip in the village, the more so because her husband is the most important person in the place. [415] [52] ●